Misuse of Social Forestry

1073. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 90 per cent of social forestry is used in rural India as a means of fuel and that there is a sharp decline over the years in India's forest wealth;

(b) whether it has caused serious environmental problems; and

(c) if so, what steps are proposed to be taken to stop this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) and (b) Substantial quantity of bio-mass produced under social forestry is used in rural India as fuelwood. The forest resources are showing indication of deterioration due to acute pressure of increasing human and cattle population leading to certain environmental problems.

(c) Taking up massive afforestation programmes, making it a people's movement, reclamation of wastelands, raising public awareness of the dangers of environmental degradation and mobilising popular support for environmental protection are some of the steps taken by the Government.

Misuse of Replenishment Licences for Silk Import

1074. SHRI DINKARRAO GOVINDRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the misuse of replenishment licences for silk import; and

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take to check such misuse?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) and (b) It has been alleged that REP licences are being misused. The matter is being investigated and if need be appropriate action would be taken under the provisions of Imports & Exports (Control) Act, 1947 and the Orders issued thereunder.

Expansion of Indo-Australian trade

1075. SHRI DINKARRAO GOVINDRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any talks on Indo-Australian trade expansion were recently held in Delhi; and

(b) if so, what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) Indo-Australian Joint Business Council met in New Delhi during March, 18-20th, 1987.

(b) During the course of discussions, possibilities of exports by India and imports from Australia were explored. Areas for establishment of Joint-Ventures and for Joint-Manufacture were also identified.

Rehabilitation of Sick Textile Mills

1076. SHRI DINKARRAO GOVINDRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set apart any fund for rehabilitation of sick textile mills; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Government do not set apart funds for the rehabilitation of sick textile mills. Such funds are provided by the financial institutions/banks.